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The Recall

Senator Bailey's resignation (and the withdrawal of the resignation) has given to the initiative, referendum and recall more advertisement than the direct legislation league could have purchased with a million dollars, and advertisement is all these reforms need. As soon as the people understand them they will adopt them—shocking as this may seem to those who think that these reforms will destroy the institutions bequeathed by our fathers. As the recall is the reform least understood, and therefore most violently attacked, let us examine this method of dealing with officials.

There may be differences of opinion as to how many signers should be required in order to invoke the recall, but that is merely a matter of detail. When the right of recall is admitted the percentage required to call an election can be fixed by agreement among those favoring the recall—and it will probably be a compromise between extreme views as to notice of election, time required for consideration and means used to inform the public. These also, are matters of detail and do not affect the right itself. Such safeguards will be thrown around the use of the recall as experience may prove necessary. But as to the right of recall—two questions are raised:

First—Have the voters a right to terminate the contract entered into, when the candidate accepted the office? This question cannot arise if the candidate is elected after the adoption of the recall, because he will take the office subject to the right of the people to recall. But the question could not give much trouble any way, because provisions could be made, if necessary, for the salary to be paid for the unexpired term. If an official demonstrates his unfitness for an office the people can much better afford to pay him while not serving than to allow him to serve even without compensation.

The second question—the only real question in fact—is whether the recall so robs the official of independence as to injure the public service. This question admits of but one answer. Why should a public official be independent of the wishes of his constituents? It is an aristocratic—not a democratic—conception of representative government that contemplates that the representative will be indifferent of the wishes of his constituents. The democratic theory is that the people will think for themselves and select representatives to give expression to their thoughts. The moral and intellectual standard of the representative will not be lowered by an increased watchfulness on the part of the public. Banks have not lost anything in standing and character by the fact that they are now examined and may be closed without a moment's notice. On the contrary, the banking level has been raised and it will be raised still more when the law requires the bank to give absolute

A SPECIAL SESSION PROGRAM

How impossible it is to read the future! Who would have prophesied January 1st, 1909, that by July 1st, 1911, an income tax amendment would have been submitted by a republican president, senate and house, and ratified by a majority of states? Who would have predicted that by that time an amendment would have been submitted for the election of United States senators by popular vote? Who expected tariff reduction so soon? And yet the special session democrats wanted but could not compel is here and brought by the "old guard!"

Now democracy has its chance. Let it improve it; let it meet the responsibilities of the hour.

First—Let it ratify the reciprocity agreement—the failure to ratify which brought the special session.

Second—Let it admit Arizona and New Mexico.

Third—Let it submit a constitutional amendment providing for election of United States senators by direct vote.

Fourth—Let it reduce the tariff, schedule by schedule, and either relieve the people or present an issue for the president and his party to meet.

Cannonism has already been overthrown and there are other reforms that need attention, but the ones mentioned come first. Now for business.

security to depositors, so officials will be better when the betrayal of trust—the embezzlement of power—is dealt with as a crime.

But if independence is the thing desired, is that not already menaced by frequent elections? If independence is necessary, how can we secure it except by life tenure? How can a congressman act independently if eleven months after the first regular session convenes his constituents may defeat him at the polls because of some vote he has cast or some speech he has made? In state and city the situation is the same. The recall asked for would only be invoked on rare occasions, while the form of recall which we now have in frequent elections acts as a restraint on all officials and acts constantly. How can we condemn the proposed recall as dangerous or destructive, and at the same time approve of short official terms? And does not impeachment act as a restraint on independence? The regular election is a form of impeachment; it gives the people a chance to remove at stated times, by refusing re-election. The recall simply goes a step farther and permits the voters to shorten the term when, in their judgment, the official has betrayed his trust. The fact is, that opposition to the recall is a reversion to aristocracy, plutocracy and monarchy. The objection rests upon a distrust of the capacity of the people or upon a contempt for their rights. Because the people have a right to self-government and the capacity for self-government, and because the people are conscious of their right and confident of their capacity, they favor the recall—and will, in time, secure it.

ROCKEFELLER'S PASTOR

Rev. Charles F. Aked, John D. Rockefeller's pastor, has announced to his congregation his probable resignation, and in so doing he gave expression to his disappointment at the failure of the church to live up to its possibilities. As there was no lack of money in the church—Rockefeller himself could have supplied, without sacrifice, all the money the pastor could have used—the explanation must be found in lack of inclination. If the pastor is deeply interested in applied christianity he cannot be blamed for desiring to escape from the pestilential moral atmosphere which surrounds the oil magnate. The only criticism is that he did not anticipate this very condition. If he will re-read Christ's explanation of the parable of the Sower he may have a new appreciation of the Savior's wisdom when he declared that "The cares of this world and deceitfulness of riches choke the truth."

Mr. Bryan in Tennessee

Mr. Bryan addressed the Tennessee legislature at Nashville, February 18th. The Nashville Tennessean gives the following report of Mr. Bryan's address:

Mr. Bryan was introduced by Representative G. M. Miller, of Marshall county, who said:

"Mr. Chairman, Members of the General Assembly of Tennessee, Ladies and Gentlemen: Some years ago a prominent minister of this state was called to the pastorate of a church in a distant state. Upon reaching his new field of labor, he held a conference with the officers of his charge and inquired of them as to the progress of the church. He was informed that the church was not prospering; that one addition had been made to the church in several months, and that was a very small boy. The minister was interested in this boy, and assisted him in every possible way toward a better life.

"This boy became a regular attendant at Sunday school and mid-week services, and soon the officers of the church were proud that he was a member. The minister, after some years of labor, left the charge and went to another state; the boy also moved to another state.

"This young man had so impressed himself upon the life of his pastor that he watched his course with a great deal of interest. He saw him in Nebraska as a factor for good in the state; he saw him in congress associated with Governor McMillin and others, preparing an income tax law; he saw him three times selected as the standard-bearer of a great national party.

"It is this boy, now the most distinguished citizen of the nation, who is the guest of our fair state; and it is but fair to say that more ideas of governmental affairs advocated by this man have become crystallized into national laws than any other man in the last 100 years.

"I am not unmindful of the honor conferred upon me by the committee to present to you this most distinguished visitor, and the nation's distinguished son, the Hon. William J. Bryan."

Mr. Bryan was greeted with enthusiasm which was evidenced by universal applause as he rose. Mr. Bryan spoke as follows:

Members of the Senate and House of Representatives and Gentlemen: I esteem it a very great honor to be invited before your legislature to deliver an address. I recognize the prominent position which your great state occupies among its sister states; I recognize the conspicuous part that Tennessee has played in the nation's history, and I appreciate the opportunity that is thus given to me to deliver an address upon subjects of interest to a group of men to whom has been intrusted the direction of your governmental affairs at this time.

I need not assure you that in speaking to you I recognize that I speak purely as a citizen. I am entirely conscious of the fact that my words will carry no weight except as they commend themselves to your judgment and your consciences, and I am not sorry that in speaking I must speak, under this seeming embarrassment, for I think I can speak with more freedom when I know that you are free to reject that which you do not approve. One who speaks with authority speaks under restraint, for when people must obey when they cannot refuse, the responsibility is so great that one is fearful that his words may have a force that they do not merit. But when one can speak as I speak, and allow what he says to have influence only so far as you think the words deserve influence, he can then say what he pleases and you bear the responsibility with him. And yet I shall not abuse the courtesy that you have extended to me; I shall not endeavor in speaking to you to force upon you any ideas which I may entertain alone, or in company with but few. Rather let me be the voice, if I may, of a large number of people and let me present to you some thoughts which are the result of a large experience, not of my own, but of the multitude.

I never address a legislative body without being impressed anew the duties of the legis-

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